

REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated July 3, 2006. In the amendment, claims 1-20 have been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution of their subject matter in this or another application, and claims 21-37 have been added such that claims 21-37 remain pending in the application. Reconsideration of the pending claims in light of this amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

These amendments add no new matter. Providing a first group by arranging rule data according to a priority order, and then a second group by rearranging the rule data sequentially, dividing the rearranged group into sequential groups, and then providing another rearrangement according to the priority order within the defined groups is variously described throughout Applicant's specification as filed, including but not limited to FIG. 3 and the related description, which indicates composition of the second group, FIG. 5 and the related description, which indicates second rearrangement according to priority within such groups, as well as retrieval of data according to the same.

Claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶2, as failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant submits that this rejection is moot in light of the cancellation of claims 1-20, and further submits that new claims 21-37 enjoy the requisite particularity and distinctiveness.

With regard to the comments of the Examiner, Applicant submits that the term "rule data" is clear. Applicant submits that terms do not have to be specifically defined in the specification, in which case they should be accorded their ordinary meaning, as understood by a person having ordinary skill in the art. Applicant further submits that rule data, and the storage thereof, is known. For example, rule data may correspond to packet data (*e.g.*, the rule data may be packet prefix data). An example as such is explained in Applicant's background of the invention (see, *e.g.*, ¶0004-7 of the published version of the application). Additionally, simplified representations of rule data are variously provided throughout the specification, including FIGs. 2-5 (100). Applicant respectfully submits that the term rule data is clear.

With regard to the "first processing significance degree" and "second processing significance degree", Applicant appreciates the Examiner's attention to the claims in this regard,

and has removed the usage of such language and submits that the new claims use terminology that should not be found to be objectionable. Finally, Applicant has also removed language “order from smaller (larger) second processing significance,” and believes that the new language should not be objectionable. The term sequentially is used, which sequence may of course be generally ascending or descending.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶2.

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2002/0181263 to Yanagawa (“Yanagawa”).

New claim 21 recites: *[a] data retrieval device, comprising:*

a rearrangement means, which applies a first rearranging of a first data group that includes a plurality of rule data arranged in an order of priority of the rule data, said first rearranging being a sequential ordering according to the numerical value of the rule data;

an assignment means for grouping the rearranged first data group to provide a plurality of memory blocks respectively having an assigned range corresponding to the rearranged first data group, wherein said rearrangement means applies a second rearranging within each of the plurality of memory blocks, said second rearranging being a priority ordering according to said order of priority of the rule data; and

a block selection means, for specifying one of the plurality of memory blocks to provide a specified memory block, wherein said specifying is based upon a comparison of input retrieval data to the assigned ranges of the plurality of memory blocks.

Applicant submits that the amended claims are neither disclosed nor suggested by Yanagawa. Yanagawa discloses a contents addressable memory with accelerated data shunting. The memory includes memory cells arranged in a matrix with word lines extending along a row crossing bit lines extending along a column. Search buses extend along the column and match lines extending along the row. Each memory cell has a comparison circuit that compares data in the search bus and data therein, and outputs a comparison result accordingly. Transfer cells temporarily store data from the memory cell.

The architecture of Yanagawa purportedly accommodates high speed data transfer and avoids reading and writing from external equipment in the transfer of stored data. At best, there is some mention of data prioritization (e.g., ¶0007), but there is no mention whatsoever of the specific arrangement, grouping, rearrangement, and block selection that is claimed by Applicant. In particular, there is no disclosure or suggestion of “*grouping the rearranged first data group to provide a plurality of memory blocks respectively having an assigned range corresponding to the rearranged first data group, and for applying a second rearranging within each of the plurality of memory blocks, said second rearranging being a priority ordering according to said order of priority of the rule data,*” as claimed by Applicant. These features allow the prioritized rule data to be grouped in support of block selection, without conflicting with the priority order that is desired for the rule data.

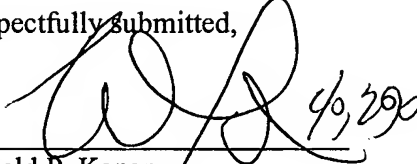
Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Yanagawa of “*specifying one of the plurality of memory blocks to provide a specified memory block, wherein said specifying is based upon a comparison of input retrieval data to the assigned ranges of the plurality of memory blocks.*” Yanagawa appears to use conventional approaches for accessing content addressable memory. There is no apparent rearrangement of a previously prioritized data group sequentially, followed by grouping to provide groups having respective assigned ranges that are used to specify memory blocks. There is also no specification of a particular memory block according to a comparison of input retrieval data to the assigned ranges.

For reasons similar to those provided regarding claim 21, independent claims 29 and 33 are also neither disclosed nor suggested by Yanagawa, nor are dependent claims 22-28, 30-32, and 34-37 for their incorporation of the features recited in the independent claims, as well as the patentably distinct features separately recited therein.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and allowance of the claims which remain in the application are solicited. If any further issues remain, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to resolve them.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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